

# Hereford Heckler



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## HECKLER TV PRESENTS: 'ME WE'

'Me We' takes its title from what is said to be the shortest poem in the world, written by Mohammed Ali. This emotionally powerful film is a collaboration between local filmmaker Craig White and the Herefordshire Equality Partnership. It follows the impact that racism has on the people of Herefordshire, in particular the problems faced by mixed raced families and their children.

People from various backgrounds tell their stories in an open manner, which at times leaves you stunned. This might be painful viewing to some, but it's not as painful as the damage caused by racism. The film covers, what seems to be, the limited effort that the police have with dealing with these issues. But goes on to show the work that is being done in schools to teach our children to be tolerant and accepting of different people. A big Heckler pat on the back goes out to all those involved in making this film.

**Watch 'Me We' at [Youtube.com/HecklerTV](http://Youtube.com/HecklerTV)**

# POOL WON'T REOPEN

**HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL will not be reopening the LEA pool for the foreseeable future, the *Hereford Heckler* can reveal.**

Discussing the issue at a council cabinet meeting on 20th November 2008, councillors took the decision that the Leisure pool currently used by Herefordshire schools was adequate for local needs.

In a press release issued on the day of the meeting council leader Roger Phillips said he welcomed "ideas for how the pool could be repaired and run". There's something worrying about a leader of the council not knowing how to repair and run a swimming pool isn't there?! Here's an idea, Roger, we give you the boot and use your wages and expenses to reopen the pool immediately!

Leaks in the pool were first noted in 2001 and they have been an on-going problem over the years, but repairs were clearly not sufficient.

The *Heckler* believe that as the maintenance costs continued to rise on what was a loss operating LEA pool, Herefordshire Council stopped carrying out repair works to the required standard with a view to selling off the pool wholesale to an outside agency.

In 2005 Herefordshire Council entered into talks with Halo to effectively privatise the LEA pool but an agreement was never reached as Halo deemed the pool in such a poor state that they wouldn't take on full management because of the high costs potentially needed for repair work.

Now under part-management with Halo, leaks to the pool continued to be reported in 2006 and 2007.



**A KICK IN THE TEETH:** School pupils are now forced to use the public pool for lessons

In a document prepared for a recent council meeting, cabinet members were told: "The Sydonia pool in Leominster was in a similar situation to the current LEA swimming pool. The pool had reached the stage of being beyond economical repair and in this instance was a health hazard." A health hazard that was created by Herefordshire Council themselves! Could the council be guilty of negligence for failing to meet safety standards? There's certainly a case for it.

Members were also told the LEA pool was initially closed because the boiler had failed and that the emergency lights might not be working properly. A normal person would call a plumber and an electrician. But why bother

fixing these problems when you're trying to shut the pool down.

And so the move to the Leisure pool began.

The council failed to investigate the effects the closure of the LEA pool would have on schools, community groups and the general public. They have also failed to provide changing facilities that are suitably separate from the general public to ensure adequate safety for the children using the Leisure pool.

The council's press release concluded: "Currently, school swimming lessons are provided for the majority of primary schools in clean and well-maintained pools in the county run by the council's partner Halo." What a \*!@\$!# joke!

**Give Roger a call on the LEA POOL COMPLAINT HOTLINE: 07792 880019** (lines may be busy)



## HELEN HECKLER

■ According to the *Hereford Times* **we shouldn't all be so worried about our jobs**, some local businesses are actually doing very well for themselves.

The paper recently cited the Dairy House, Tyrrells and Westons as local firms making millions. And how is that relevant to me?! Seriously, I couldn't care less if a few companies are raking it in or that the county's supposedly full of aspiring yuppies, I've got bills to pay and mouths to feed. How about the *Hereford Times* tells me something useful, like what's the best way to give Gordon Brown a slap!

■ **Does anyone really take Jesse 'toff-boy' Norman seriously anymore?**

The local Tory candidate has been out scoring cheap votes for himself again, this time by lending a hand to litter pickers in the city. He wrote on his website\*: "I'm not interested in the campaigns I get involved with but it makes me look good. So vote for me, chaps, vote for me."

Is there anything he *won't* do to win votes? Jesse, will you clean my toilet if I promise to vote for you? I can arrange for a photographer to be there too. What's that, Jesse? "I'm on my way Helen."

■ **So Peter Mandelson is now Lord of Foy is he?** Mandelson lived in the village back in the 1980s and obviously made such an impression on the locals that they've voted for him to become their Lord.

What ... no one voted? So, he just decides to be 'Baron Mandelson of Foy in the County of Herefordshire' and it happens? Well, stuff the lot of you then. From now on I couldn't give a damn about the working class, I'm off to join the Labour Party! And I want to be Lady Helen of ... of ... Lady Helen of Hinton! Now get on your knees and kiss my feet.

Love and kisses,

*Lady Helen*

\*Ok, those might not've been his exact words, but that's how I interpreted them

# JOBS GO AS RECESSION BITES

Herefordshire workers continue to feel the heat of the ever-worsening global recession as jobs continue to be axed at county firms.

Fourteen workers at car parts supplier LSUK and 18 workers at Kingspan's Pembridge factory are among the latest to lose their jobs.

Across the region jobs have also been threatened and lost in Abergavenny, Merthyr Tydfil and Worcester and like every recession before it the people at the bottom are the ones that are feeling the worst of the effects.

Mass unemployment is becoming a reality; the government's solution of dishing out money to rich bankers and urging people to spend, borrow, spend won't do anything. It is as much use as trying to put out a raging fire with barrels of petrol.

Working class people are the ones who are suffering (notice that the bosses are never the first ones to go when company profits start taking a knock). Thousands of families now don't know how they will put food on the table or pay the bills from week to week living on the dole.

Job losses must be resisted in every possible way. But the capitalist system that creates these problems in the first place must also be overthrown completely. It was this economic system that created past and present recessions, and in times of 'financial stability' capitalism is responsible for making the rich richer whilst the rest of us barely notice any difference.

As the recession bites many will no doubt look for someone to blame for the financial mess. In a year's time will the greedy bankers

be remembered for handing out vast sums of dosh so they can callously reap billions in profit? Will we remember the spineless politicians giving unimaginable sums of money to the same greedy bankers? Unfortunately many will point the finger closer to home, blaming people who are in the same boat as the rest of us.



Factory building at Royal Worcester where workers have been made redundant

Politicians, and parties like the BNP, will capitalise on the country's misery and be quick to point the blame at easy targets like immigrants as a burden on society. Politicians will conveniently forget the part they played in it all.

The story of the Jews in 1930s Germany is a horrific reminder of how a section of society, perceived to be different to those 'native' to the country were blamed for a nation's economic problems.

When politicians, the media and fascist thugs look for scapegoats to blame to satisfy their own objectives, look for the real causes and get rid of the real problem.

## BIG BROTHER SWINGS INTO ACTION

The UK government has starting issuing compulsory identity cards to non-EU citizens who apply for an extension of their stay in the UK. The move came on 25th November and applies to students or as the husbands, wives or partners of permanent residents.

From next year other foreign nationals living here will be issued with ID cards. Compulsory ID cards will be rolled out to all UK citizens from 2010 onwards.

Central to the ID card system is the National Identity Register a database that will contain all your personal details—full name, address (current and all previous), bank details, health records, fingerprints (no longer just for criminals) and iris scan! There will also be a whole host of fines, for example if you forget to update your address when you move.

Forcing people to provide information on this scale is an attack on our dignity. Why is the government so keen to introduce this scheme?

ID cards won't protect us from terrorism any more than number plates stop car crime. They won't stop identity fraud; both Australia

and the USA have far worse problems of identity theft than Britain, precisely because of general reliance on a single reference database like the one proposed here. They won't control immigration anymore than passports currently do.

On the 19th November 2008 members of the Scottish Parliament voted overwhelmingly against ID cards, but without direct power to stop their introduction. The vote was 69 – 0, with 38 abstentions, against the introduction of ID cards in Scotland. This show of no confidence was said to be based upon concerns over civil liberties, data protection, the £5bn cost of the cards and several European examples where ID cards had not deterred acts of terrorism.

ID cards are the most visible part of a rapidly growth of the database state, which exists to allow the government officials to poke around in our private lives. The only way to stop ID cards is to refuse to have one. Remember the poll tax? That was stopped by public defiance.

**For a good resource on the surveillance state visit [www.nottingham-defy-id.org.uk](http://www.nottingham-defy-id.org.uk)**





**GOT YOUR NUMBER:** Hereford BNP leafleting in Tupsley in November

# BASH THE FASH

## ANTI-FASCIST NEWS AND VIEWS

■ **Back in October the BNP attempted a re-launch in east London, but things didn't quite go to plan.** They were meeting at a church hall in Bethnal Green, but were kicked out when the vicar realised they weren't the 'book club' they said they were. On the way out, the BNP came face-to-face with 40 anti-fascists resulting in a short, sharp political discussion ... and the BNP hitting the floor. Ouch!

■ Loony neo-nazis in Leeds were stopped after attempting a protest against Black rap music at a music store. **A measly 21 nut-jobs turned up two hours late after 400 anti-fascists occupied their spot outside HMV.** The neo-nazis were surrounded so they could not be heard, or even seen, by any members of the public they were hoping to preach their vile racial hatred to. The fascists then ran for an awaiting taxi, driven by an Asian man. Oh, the irony!

■ News has reached us that another anti-fascist has been killed in Russia. **Four fascists murdered 27-year-old Filatov 'Fedjay' Feodor Vasilevich** on 10th October outside his house. He was taken to hospital where he later died.

■ Attacks by fascists are becoming ever more regular in Italy and in late October this was demonstrated when a gang of thugs attacked a student and trade union gathering with belts and chains. They later returned to the same square where the student demonstration was still taking place, but this time the tables were turned! **As TV crews were interviewing the fascists, students and trade unionists hit back.** Chairs, tables and bottles rained down on the baton-wielding fascists. In a very short space of time they were rolling around on the floor licking their wounds before being taken away by the police.

■ On the same day in Poland, 300 fascists attempted to march through Warsaw. **A counter demonstration was called and anti-fascists formed barricades across the road**—the fascists were prevented from going any further. They were then taken on a detour by police, where they came up against yet more opposition, before prematurely calling it a day. And a bad one at that!

## DO THEY THINK WE'RE STUPID?

Twenty-seven members of the British National Party were revealed to be living in Herefordshire after the entire party membership lists were leaked online at the end of November.

The list revealed that paedophiles and convicted criminals were members of the fascist party as well as police officers and teachers.

Hereford BNP has yet again been distributing their racist leaflets around Herefordshire, promoting idiotic ideas like a whites-only NHS. But they really must think us Herefordians are stupid. Most people can see through the BNP's carefully crafted promises of lower taxes, more houses and a supposedly better NHS to the real core of their politics: racism and hatred. They pick the standard promises from all political parties and we all know that no matter who gets elected they don't really give a damn about us. But the politics of the BNP differs slightly from other wannabe leaders. Their nasty insidious plan is to divide society along racial lines by blaming all our problems on anyone who isn't a 'native Brit', whatever that means. It seems these halfwits believe themselves to be whiter than white.

The BNP like all far-right racist politicians use all the tricks in the book to fool you into thinking they have the solutions to society's problems.

They claim they'll do something about violent crime but just a glance at their membership shows just the opposite: BNP member David

Copeland set off a series of nail bombs in 1999 killing three people including a pregnant woman and injuring 129 others. Local BNP member Lambertus Nieuwhof who lives in Peterchurch was also convicted in South Africa on terrorism charges for attempting to blow up a primary school.

They want kick out all British citizens who they claim are non-indigenous. But what does non-indigenous mean? Does it mean all those descended from Normans, or Romans, or Vikings, or Saxons, or Indians, or Jamaicans, or Poles? This country is built on centuries of immigration. Diversity is something to celebrate not to use to divide us.

They claim to be the party of the ordinary working man and woman, yet one member recently sent a hate letter to anti-fascists; he signed it off with "smash the miners (oh, I forgot, that lovely Thatcher bird already did). Victory to the police!" Not just a kick in the teeth for miners and ex-miners but for all working class people who have struggled for better conditions in their lives.

So it's clear to see that this bunch of thugs stand for hatred and violence not commonsense and justice as they'd have you believe. A vote for the BNP is a vote for a political party that looks to nazi Germany for inspiration. We should not forget that nearly 400,000 British citizens died in World War Two as a result of the same fascist politics that inspire the BNP.

## OH GOD, IT'S CHRISTMAS AGAIN!

Yes, it's that time of year again, when advertising causes kids to scream 'I want, I want, I want'. That time of year when we're all made to feel guilty if we don't spend, spend, spend. Yes folks, here comes Christmas. To a lot of people Christmas is a chance to get together with friends and family and have a old good knees up. To others it's a chance to make as much money as possible. It's probably fair to say most people don't celebrate

Christmas for any religious reason but because it's a tradition. A tradition that means profits galore for big business and puts pressure on parents to provide the 'best' for their kids. But if we've managed to lose all the religious stuff is it possible that we can lose all the commercial stuff as well? Just imagine Christmas without adverts, no more special edition 'turkey and stuffing' crisps and a Christmas with hangovers that only last for a couple of days, not all year.



OO AH CANTONA: Eric Cantona does his bit for the anti-racist cause

## KICK RACISM OUT OF FOOTBALL ... LITERALLY

As the Everton players were leaving the pitch after an away match in London, the dark haired centre forward Dixie Dean received some racist comments from an opposing fan. His immediate reaction was to punch the racist fool before disappearing down the players' tunnel. This was the 1930s and the reaction of the police was to inform the racist that he deserved what he got!

During a match between Crystal Palace and Manchester United in 1995, Frenchman Eric Cantona reacted to a barrage of racial abuse he received from a Palace fan by aiming a kung-fu kick at his attacker. The punishment for this incident, broadcast live on television, was to ban Cantona for nine months. When interviewed sometime later Cantona said his

only regret was not hitting him harder!

We are now in 2008 and the FA, UEFA and FIFA are still unwilling to do anything effective about racism on the terraces or on the pitch. The FA should be making an example of racist incidents on the pitch, this would send to right message to those on the terrace. UEFA's handling of racist chanting in clubs around Europe is, at best, pathetic. And it ultimately falls on FIFA to set out what should be done about this behaviour, but as usual they are more interested in lining their pockets than dealing with real issues.

**You have to wonder if Dean and Cantona showed the most effective way of kicking racism out of football. Joey Barton beware!**

## SWITCH IT TURNER!

What is going on at Edgar Street? Out of the cup, unable to score, low crowds, low morale on the pitch and terrace. Have we just been unlucky or are we not good enough to stay in League One?

Everyone knows goals win games and if you're not scoring them then you're not going to win much. It doesn't take a genius to see we need a striker or two. Defensively we haven't been too bad so maybe splashing some cash on a couple of players will change things. But the transfer window doesn't open till January, and at the rate we're going we'll be down by then.

Compared to last season we've been very unlucky with injuries. Giant goalkeeper Matt Murray and speedy winger Lionel Ainsworth are the latest players to be side lined. But at least are not as crap as Cheltenham Town!

There have been some quiet murmurings about changing the board or the manager, but let's face it, it's not really the best time to be looking for new owners. The best long term possibility would be for United to become a community owned club, it wouldn't guarantee success but at least there'd be more input from the supporters who pay their money every week. And as managers go two promotions in three years isn't all that bad. Let's hope Graham Turner can switch things around a bit and get it sorted. What ever happens, this is going to be a long season. **Come-on you Whites!**



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**INCLUDING ALL BACK ISSUES**

## RUGBY ON THE UP

Hereford Rugby Club is following on from last season's strong campaign with another push for promotion. A solid start to the season has been followed by a couple of narrow defeats in what is arguably a very competitive division. What with local rivals Luctonians pushing for a place in the National League, local rugby is looking very healthy indeed, far

healthier than the national team at any rate. So if you're in need of some quality sporting entertainment this winter and ticket prices elsewhere are putting you off, we recommend you get yourselves down to Wyeseid and cheer on the lads. Where else can you enjoy a pint of quality local ale while watching quality local sport?

■ **Hereford Solidarity League** works to build a society based on the ideas of **freedom, equality and community** ■ **Anti-fascism** is an important part of our politics, but we believe that all politicians, including those of fascist parties like the BNP, maintain a system of inequality, privilege and control that divides communities ■ Real change does not happen at the ballot box and can only come about by **independent working class action**; that is, people looking out for each other and organising themselves to deal with the problems that they experience on a day to day basis ■ Our aim is to increase the **fighting spirit** and self-confidence of working class people to change things for themselves ■ **[kay.bulstreet@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:kay.bulstreet@hotmail.co.uk)**

